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AUTHOR Bottum, Cherie Toll
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ABSTRACT

Three recently published books intended to help both new and experienced college teachers with their teaching methods and skills are given brief but favorable reviews. "The Art and Craft of Teaching" (edited by Margaret Morganroth Gullette) includes chapters and essays on teaching methods, the first day of class, lecturing, questioning in discussion classes, being a section leader, teaching throughout a semester, and grading. "A Practical Handbook for College Teachers" (by Barbara Schneider Fuhrmann and Anthony F. Grasha) is a well-organized, thorough book which explores college teaching from every aspect. It includes tests for self-analysis and discusses a variety of nontraditional subjects such as behavioral, humanistic, and cognitive perspectives on teaching; the role of personal values in influencing teaching; and the matching of learning and teaching styles. "On Teaching and Learning in College" (by Paul L. Dressel and Dora Marcus) examines the overemphasis in undergraduate school on having students master a discipline rather than having them learn how to learn. The authors discuss ways of helping students develop a learning framework which allows them to become lifelong learners without being dependent on formal education for that learning. (DC)

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Booked For Teaching

How can we think of good teaching without thinking of good books? In addition to Kenneth Eble's *The Aims of College Teaching*, which is excerpted in this issue, we have collected the following recent books that illuminate and explore the path to the joys of teaching.

THE ART AND CRAFT OF TEACHING edited by Margaret Morganroth Gullette. Cambridge: Harvard-Danforth Center for Teaching and Learning, 1982, 130 pages, index, $7.80 paperback.

Although C. Roland Christensen states that this book is written for new teachers, it would be valuable for any teacher—to reaffirm the importance of the skills that good teachers have, and to illuminate and explain them to novices.

The first three chapters discuss practical concerns: the advantages of various teaching methods, specific advice for that crucial first day of class, and the theory and practice of lectures.

"Questioning," a perceptive essay by Thomas Kasulis, examines the many kinds of teaching and learning that various types of questions create. He says discussion classes have three components: content, process and people; and the teacher's task is to ask "three-dimensional questions—about the right issue, at the right time, of the right person." Helpful analyses and examples are given for developing this deceptively simple skill.

Ullica Segerstrole writes an insightful examination of the section leader's role. She asserts that many leaders fail to see beyond the obvious need to lead a good discussion, and that leaders must take a more active role than many assume. Often the leader must become a mediator between the students and the professor. If the students are not performing well, Segerstrole gives tactful advice on meeting with the professor to focus on the "students' difficulties rather than on the professor's communications skills."

In an artful essay, "The Rhythms of the Semester," Laura Nash discusses the subtleties of pace, variety, and continuity. She concludes that "the fully developed semester is no more a string of identical discussions than a great symphony is 400 repetitions of a C major chord."

Christopher Jedrey gives practical consideration to "Grading and Evaluation." Since most exams include essays, he maintains that "grading is inherently subjective." He recommends that students be given one or more evaluations before the final exam or paper. "Students should have a chance to test themselves, and to improve."

Reading this book is a pleasure—it is like sitting in on a round-table discussion with nine master teachers.

A PRACTICAL HANDBOOK FOR COLLEGE TEACHERS by Barbara Schneider Fuhrmann and Anthony F. Grasha. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1983, 315 pages, index, $24.95 hardback, $10.95 paperback.

As the title implies, this book is useful and very thorough; it explores college teaching from every angle and aspect—from paternalistic colonial colleges to computer learning. Valuable features are the many tests and questionnaires for the reader's self-analysis; it is a participatory book. The authors have conducted numerous workshops on college teaching, and that experience serves them, and the reader, well.

It is also an unusually well organized book, with clear divisions and summaries for each concept and

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chapter, and with many charts and tables to clarify each theory. Among the nontraditional subjects included are: the role of personal values in influencing teaching; examining teaching procedures from three perspectives: behavioral, humanistic, and cognitive learning; and various approaches to assessing your own teaching and enhancing your ability to make desired changes.

Chapter 5, Designing Classroom Experiences Based on Student Styles and Teaching Styles, is particularly useful, with charts matching student styles—ranging from "independent" to "avoidant"—with appropriate teaching methods and roles—from "expert" to, yes indeed, "person." The chapter on getting students involved is also filled with practical information, including a wide-ranging chart for diagnosing participation problems. There is a stimulating section on various course designs which explores content and noncontent goals and how to develop a variety of the instructor and student skills needed to achieve each goal.

The one disappointment in the book was the last chapter which purports to define effective teaching, but instead takes refuge in the statement that each teacher must define it for himself or herself, which left this reader, at least, with a feeling of anticlimax. That aside, however, reading this book is like participating in a lively and stimulating workshop.

ON TEACHING AND LEARNING IN COLLEGE by Paul L. Dressel and Dora Marcus. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1982, 241 pages, index, $16.95.

In addition to examining good learning and good teaching, this book takes a hard look at the important problem of the role of disciplines and the fragmentation of undergraduate education.

The authors maintain that when education is defined as the process of mastering a discipline, it too often results in viewing the teacher "as an authority who dispenses knowledge . . . to students hungry and grateful for it." The implication of this attitude is that education requires a "lifelong *formal* experience." With a wry comment on the current drive to recruit older students, the authors observe that successful lifelong education would result in a "marked increase over time in the number of students dying in class."

To avoid this dependence on formal education, the authors state that the purpose of learning is to produce independent learners in a "humanizing process." This process will create the ability to organize knowledge in a "framework" which will serve as an organizing vehicle both for the assimilation of ideas and for their recall, transfer, and application "to life experiences."

In examining ways to develop this framework, the authors discuss how to provide coherence and structure across disciplines and the underlying principles of continuity, cumulative experience, and integration.

Although Dressel and Marcus consider the large questions and come to important conclusions, the book is written in a curiously flat style, which detracts from its impact. To paraphrase Mark Twain's comment about Wagner's music, this book is better than it reads.

All in all, these books are stimulating and helpful. In addition to giving much valuable advice, each writer is a good teacher, and together they explore, to use Christensen's arresting phrase, the "beauty and generosity" of good teaching.

—CTB